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OF

# WILLIAM H. SEWARD,

AGAINST THE

## ARMED INTERVENTION OF RUSSIA

IN THE

#### HUNGARIAN REVOLUTION.

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IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 9, 1852.

### THIRD EDITION.

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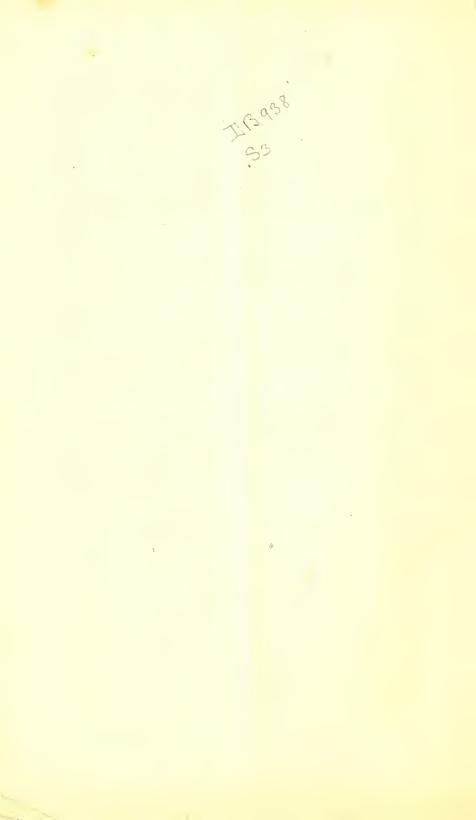




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## SPEECH.

The question was on the following resolutions, submitted by Mr. SEWARD as a substitute for resolutions introduced by the Hon. Mr. CLARKE, of Rhode Island:

Resolved, That while the United States, in consideration of the exigencies of society, habitually recognise Governments *de facto* in other States, yet that they are nevertheless by no means indifferent when such a Government is established against the consent of any people by usurpation or by armed intervention of foreign States or Nations.

Resolved, That, considering that the people of Hungary, in the exercise of the right secured to them by the Laws of Nations, in a solemn and legitimate manner asserted their national independence, and established a Government by their own voluntary act, and successfully maintained it against all opposition by parties lawfully interested in the question; and that the Emperor of Russia, without just or lawful right, invaded Hungary, and, by fraud and armed force, subverted the national independence and political constitution thus established, and thereby reduced that country to the condition of a province ruled by a foreign Power; the United States, in defence of their own interests, and of the common interests of mankind, do solemnly protest against the conduct of Russia on that occasion, as a wanton and tyrannical infraction of the Laws of Nations; and the United States do further declare that they will not hereafter be indifferent to similar acts of national injustice, oppression, and usurpation whenever or wherever they may occur.

Mr. SEWARD rose and said:

MR. PRESIDENT: Writers on law teach us that States are Free, Independent, and Equal Moral Persons, existing for the objects of Happiness and Usefulness, and possessing Rights and subject to Duties defined by the Law of Nature, which is a system of politics and morals founded in right reason; that the only difference between Politics and Morals is, that one regulates the operations of Government, while the other directs the conduct of individuals, and that the maxims of both are the same; that two sovereign States may be subject to one Prince, and yet be mutually independent; that a nation becomes free by the act of its Ruler when he exceeds the fundamental laws; that when any Power, whether domestic or foreign, attempts to deprive a State of independence or of liberty, it may lawfully take counsel of its courage, and prefer before the certainty of servitude the chances of destruction; that each nation is bound to do to every other in time of peace the most good, and in time of war the least harm possible, consistently with its own real interests; that while this is an imperfect obligation, of which no State can exact a performance, any one has nevertheless a right to use peaceful means, and even force, if necessary, to repress a Power that openly violates the Law of Nations, and directly attacks their common welfare; and that, although the interests of universal society require mutual intercourse between States, yet that intercourse can be conducted by those only who in their respective nations possess and exercise in fact adequate political powers.

Austria being situated in Central Europe, with only an inconsiderable seaport, we have known little of her, except that she was one of the oldest and most energetic and inexorable members of that combination of States which, under the changing names of "The Allied Powers," "The Holy League," and "The Holy Alliance," and with the unchanging pretence of devotion to Order and Religion, have more than half a century opposed and resisted everywhere the reforming and benign principles of the American Revolution.

Hungary, after having been in ages past the heroic defender of Christian Europe against the armies of Islam, and later the chivalrous guardian of Austria from the usurpations of Prussia and France, seemed near a century ago to disappear, and only four years since came again on the stage, and challenged her part in the Drama of Nations. She occupied a region within the Austrian Empire with fifteen millions of people, of whom the Magyars, a race that had inherited freedom, arts, and arms, were one-third, while the remainder were Germans, Serbs, and Wallachians, and the two latter classes were debased and virtually enslaved by feudal customs and laws. Under the Constitution given to her by an ancient King, St. Stephen, Hungary was a limited Monarchy and an absolutely independent State. Beginning, however, in 1530, she elected for her Kings the successive reigning Dukes of the House of Hapsburg Loraine for a period of one hundred and fifty years, and then gave them succession to her throne by a law of inheritance. Nevertheless, fundamental laws enacted by Hungary, and accepted by the Austrian dynasty, defined the union of the

two States, declaring that the King should have no power before coronation, that he could be crowned only on signing a compact and swearing an oath to sustain the Constitution, usages, and laws of Hungary, by virtue of which she was a free and independent State, and that she could be bound by no royal edicts or decrees, but only by laws passed by her own Diet or Legislature, and sanctioned by her King.

Hungary was always as independent of Russia as we are.

Such, Mr. President, was the condition of Hungary in March, 1848. Now she has neither Constitution, nor King, nor Diet, nor National functions, nor National organs, nor Independence, nor Liberty, nor Law, but lies prostrate at the feet of the Austrian Emperor, and receives his absolute decrees from the point of the sword. Who has wrought this melancholy and fearful change in country that had used its liberty so nobly, and had kept it so long? We shall soon see.

In February, 1848, the Hungarian Diet, while revising and meliorating their domestic laws, learned by the telegraphic wires that a Republic had risen in Paris, and that a Constitutional Government was about to rise in Vienna. Availing themselves of these propitious circumstances, they decreed the establishment of an independent National Treasury, a Resident Palatine or Viceroy, and a responsible Hungarian Ministry-institutions equally necessary, just, and constitutional. Hungary received the royal sanction of these measures with contentment and satisfaction at the very moment when only her word was wanting to subvert the Empire. Three days afterwards, the Germans obtained a Constitution at the hands of the Emperor, who thus became a limited monarch in his Austrian dominions, as he had always been in Hungary. The Hungarian Diet at once reformed the social and political condition of the State, and, abolishing Feudalism, but not without just compensation, they established equality of taxation, representation, suffrage and all legal rights among all races and classes throughout the Kingdom; and on the 11th of April the Emperor crowned this noble and beneficent work by an edict approving and confirming the new laws, "word for word."

A party of reaction, not Hungarian, but Austrian, on groundless pretences fomented insurrection in the Hungarian Provinces of Servia and Wallachia; and inasmuch as tyranny, when panic struck, cannot but be perfidious, the Emperor, violating the Constitution and laws, appointed the chief instigator, the Baron Jellachich, to the office of Ban or Governor of the seditious districts. Hungary remonstrated, and the Emperor disavowed the insurrection, denounced and deposed the Ban, and called on the Diet to provide by law promptly and effectually for the safety of the Kingdom. Nevertheless, the traitor, privately assured by the Monarch, entered the territory of the Magyars with 40,000 men, and, receiving there six auxiliary Imperial regiments, proceeded towards the Hungarian capital, marking his way with inhumanity shocking to describe-burying living men, and slaying women without mercy, and even children without remorse. In the midst of these terrors, the Emperor, the crowned and constitutional King of Hungary, rejected the defensive laws which at his own instance the Diet had passed, restored to the invading chief his dignities, and, suspending the fundamental laws, proclaimed him now not merely Ban of the insurgent provinces, but Supreme Dictator of all Hungary. Then rang throughout that land a well-known voice-a voice that a tyrant once had stifled for three years in an Austrian dungeon, and that in its turn had made that tyrant take refuge in the subterranean vaults of Schoenbrunn, and in the mountain fastnesses of the Tyrol—a voice that has since been heard by all nations. In tones sad yet bold, and in language solemn yet cheering and prophetic, it predicted that this treason of the King would work out the independence of the Magyar State, and closed with the appeal, "To arms! to arms! every man to arms! And let the women dig a deep grave between Veszprem and Fehervar, in which to bury either the name, fame, and nationality of Hungary, or our enemy!" The sons of Attila rose as one man, the Diet took its firm resolve, the Ministry executed it, and the Nation organized almost in a day and appointed and supplied as soon, by the genius which had summoned it to the field, met, defeated, and chased the invader to the very walls of Vienna, and there-sat down and waited, unhappily in vain, the concerted rising of the German Republicans for the overthrow of the Empire. The Constitutional Assembly of Austria, although cheered by popular victories, vacillated, and then of course cowered, and at last, amid the decimation of the patriots, abandoned the easy revolution. Hungary was thus left alone. Her constitutional compact and oath embarrassed the Emperor. He therefore resigned, and his son, a youth of seventeen, sprang into the throne, spurning the hateful ceremonies of a Hungarian coronation, and trampling the Constitution of St. Stephen into the earth. Nine armies at once entered Hungary on various sides, charged to complete its subjugation by concentrating on the banks of the Theiss. Not one of them reached that

beautiful river. All were assaulted, routed, and repulsed; and on the nineteenth day of April, 1849, only one year after the Nation had become free by the act of her Prince, the Diet deposed and banished the House of Hapsburg, pronounced the connection between Hungary and Austria at an end, and declared Hungary an independent State, and committed its Government under due responsibilities to its deliverer, Louis Kossuth, as Governor and President. Three days afterwards the last of the invading armies withdrew, and thus the war ceased, and Hungary was then in fact and by success of arms, as well as in law and by the voice of justice, independent and free. Nine months later, that independence was overthrown by two hundred thousand Russian troops, with one hundred and forty thousand Austrian auxiliaries, at the command of the Czar, on no better pretext than this: that the successful example of Hungary was dangerous to order and religion in Europe. But this was nothing less (in the words of Grotius) than "a deprivation" of Hungary of "what belonged to her," by Russia, "for her own advantage;" and such acts have been universally condemned as criminal by all writers on the Law of Nations from the dawn of that science until its present noon. When, in this fresh and accumulated invasion and intervention, the national armies, not without extraordinary and cheering successes, were at last hemmed in and around the national fortresses, and there remained only a hope that terms of capitulation might be obtained, Gorgey, the victorious and popular military chief, became contumacious towards the civil authorities. He was deposed, but was restored as an indispensable alternative; and then, holding in his own hands the only available means of effective resistance, he exacted an absolute dictatorship as a condition of using them. Invested with supreme power, he used it to complete a surrender of the country in pursuance of previous concert with the enemy, without conditions, except in one instance, and without striking a blow. The civil leader, with a small but heroic band, escaped into Turkey; and now, after undergoing long surveillance there, restored to freedom and activity, he is amongst us, with a soul unsubdued by treachery, misfortune, poverty, reproach, and exile, preparing a new revolution for his fatherland, which, as soon as it was surrendered to the Czar, was by him delivered over to the Emperor, and at once submerged in the Austrian Empire.

Sir, on the grounds of these principles and these facts I submit to the Senate and to the People of the United States that certain propositions implied in the Protest offered by the honorable Senator from Michigan, [Mr. CASS,] and fully and distinctly expressed in that presented by myself, are cstablished, namely :

1. That the People of Hungary, in the exercise of rights secured to them by the Law of Nations, in a solemn and legitimate manner asserted their national independence, and established a Government by their own voluntary act, and successfully maintained it against all parties lawfully interested in the question.

2. That the Emperor of Russia, without just or lawful right, invaded Hungary, and by fraud and armed force subverted the national independence and political Constitution thus established, and thereby reduced that country to the condition of a Province ruled by a foreign and absolute Power.

3. That although the United States, from the necessities of political society, recognise the existing rule in Hungary, yet they are not indifferent to the usurpation and conquest by which it was established.

4. That they may lawfully protest against that conquest and usurpation, and against any new armed intervention by Russia to uphold it against the will of the People of Hungary, if it shall be expressed.

Sir, this being the whole of our case, and it being thus established, I ask why shall we not proclaim that just and lawful Protest?

An honorable Senator [Mr. MILLER] answers that we shall not speak because "the matter is foreign." But how is it foreign? Does it not arise in The family of nations, and are we not a member of that family, and interested in its welfare, and therefore in the laws by which that welfare is secured? There was a Senate two thousand years ago, in which that objection provoked a rebuke from one who never indulged a thought of the Republic that was not divine. "Haec lex socialis est," said Cicero, "hoc jus nationum exterarum est: Hanc habent arcem, minus aliquanto nunc quidem munitam quam antea; verumtamen, si qua reliqua spes est, quae sociorum animos consolari possit, ea tota in hac lege posita est; cujus legis non modo a Populo Romano, sed ctiam ab ultimis nationibus jampridem severi custodes requiruntur."

Another Senator [Mr. CLEMENS] tells us that interest is the first law of nations, and that an enlightened sense of interest offers no argument for such a course. Sir, grauting the extraordinary rule thus assumed, the value of the objection depends on what constitutes an interest. While it is true that this proceeding will not be directly compensated by either treasure or territory, it is equally clear that we need neither, and that the promise of both would constitute no adequate motive. The commerce of Hungary is, however, an interest to be secured by us; and inconsiderable as it must be under a Despotism, it would expand under a Republic. But as it is written for individual guidance, "Man shall not live by bread alone," so is it true of nations, that riches and aggrandizement are only means and not objects of Government, and that States live and flourish not on merely physical elements, but just in the proportion that Law, Order, Peace, Justice, and Liberty, are maintained in the Commonwealth of Nations. What expenses do we not incur, what armaments do we not sustain, to protect our national rights against apprehended injustice! How much more must we not expend, what greater armaments must we not provide, if we by silence or pusillanimity encourage attacks on the common welfare of nations! It was this objection that the honorable and distinguished Senator from Kentucky [Mr. CLAY] reproved on an occasion like this in the House of Representatives, twenty years ago, when he said : "I see, and I own it with infinite regret, a tone and a feeling in the councils of the country infinitely below that which belongs to the country." Sir, it is enough for us if there be a duty, for the great Lawgiver has never subjected either individuals or societies to an obligation, without attaching to the law a penalty for its neglect, and a reward for its fulfilment.

It has already appeared that there is a duty resting upon us, unless, indeed, the act proposed would involve an injury to some real interest of our own. The question, then, is not, what shall we gain, but what shall we lose, by the Protest? In reply to this inquiry, the Senate Chamber and the country resound with alarms of war, and we are frightened with estimates of the boundless cost of the controversy, and with pictures of its calamities, fearful indeed if we are to be overborne, and still more terrible if we shall come off conquerors. Sir, I need no warnings of that kind. War is so incongruous with the dictates of reason, so ferocious, so hazardous, and so demoralizing, that I will always counsel a trial of every other lawful and honorable remedy for injustice, before a resort to that extreme measure of redress; and, indeed, I shall never counsel it except on the ground of necessary defence.

But if war is to follow this Protest, then it must come in some way, and by the act of either ourselves or our enemy. But the Protest is not a declaration, nor a menace, nor even a pledge of war in any contingency. War, then, will not come in that way, nor by or in consequence of our act. If war is nevertheless to come, it must come in retaliation of the Protest, and by the act of Russia, or of Austria, or of both. Assume now that it shall so come, will it be just? The Protest is a remonstrance addressed

to the conscience of Russia, and, passing beyond her, carries an appeal to the Reason and Justice of Mankind. As by the Municipal Law no remonstrance or complaint justifies a blow, so by the Law of Nations no remonstrance or complaint justifies a war. The war then would be unjust, and so the Protest would be not a cause, but a pretext. But a nation that will declare war on a pretext will either fabricate one or declare war without any. Let no one say that I misstate the character of this measure. It is neither untried nor new. Austria protested against the mission of Dudley Mann, and President Taylor's avowal of it. Did we go to war? Did anybody think that we ought or could go to war for that? No! we made a counter protest by the celebrated letter of the Secretary of State [Mr. WEBSTER.] Did Austria maintain her protest by a declaration of war? No; we are at peace with Austria yet, and I hope we shall be so forever. And now, hoporable Senators, I ask, if we are to shrink from this duty through fear of unjust retaliation, what duty shall we not shrink from under the same motive? And what will be the principle of our policy, when thus shrinking from obligations, but Fear instead of Duty?

And who are we, and who are Austria and Russia, that we should fear them when on the defence against an unjust war? I admit, and I hope all my countrymen will learn it without a trial, that we are not constituted for maintaining long, distant wars of conquest or of aggression. But in a defensive war levied against us on such a pretext, the reason and the sympathies of mankind would be on our side, co-operating with our own instincts of patriotism and self-preservation. Our enemies would be powerless to harm us, and we should be unconquerable.

Why, then, I ask, shall we refrain from the Protest? The answer comes up on all sides. Since, then, the measure is pacific, Russia will disregard it, and so it will be useless. Well, what if it should? It will at least be harmless. But Russia will not disregard it. It is true that we once interpleaded between the belligerents of Europe twenty-five years by protests and remonstrances in defence of our neutral rights, and vindicated them at last by resistance against one party, and open, direct war against the other. But all that is changed now. Our flag was then a stranger on the seas, our principles were then unknown. Now, both are regarded with respect and affection by the People of Europe. And that People, too, are changed. They are no longer debased and hopeless of freedom, but, on the contrary, are waiting impatiently for it, and ready to second our expressions of interest in their cause. The British nation is not insensible to our emulation. If we only speak out, do you think that they would be silent? No, sir. And when the United States and Great Britain should once speak, the ever-fraternizing bayonets of the army of France, if need were, would open a passage for the voice of that impulsive and generous nation. Who believes that Russia, despotic as she is, would brave the remonstrances of these three great Powers, sustained as they would be by the voice of Christendom? Sir, I do not know that this Protest will do Hungary or European Democracy any good. It is enough for me that, like our first of orators [Mr. WEBSTER] in a similar case, I can say, "I hope it may."

But it is replied that, if our Protest shall be disregarded, we must resort to war to maintain it, and that Louis Kossuth has confessed so much. I shall not stay long on the quibble of the lawyers who claim to have circumvented the guest at the feast to which they had bidden him. It was so that some of old sought to entangle in constructions of their national traditions the Great Teacher, who came, not to dispute with Doctors, but to call all men to repentance. This proceeding is mine, not that of the Hungarian Neophyte in American politics. It is to be settled upon arguments here, not on concessions elsewhere. And now, sir, why must we go to war to sustain our Protest? You may say, because we should be dishonored by abandoning an interest so solemnly asserted. Sir, those who oppose the Protest are willing to forsake the cause of Hungary now. Will it be more dishonorable to relinquish it after an earnest effort, than to abandon it without any effort at all in its behalf? Sir, if it be mere honor that is then to prick us on, let the timid give over their fears. A really great, enlightened, and Christian nation has just as much need to make war on a false point of honor, as a really great, enlightened, and Christian man has need to engage in a personal contest in the same case; and that is no necessity at all. Nor shall we be reduced to the alternative of war. If Hungary shall never rise, there will be no casus belli. If she shall rise, we shall have right to choose the time when to recognise her as a nation. That recognition, with its political influence and commercial benefits, will be adequate to prevent or counterbalance Russian intervention. But I am answered, that we shall unnecessarily offend Powers whom it is unwise to provoke. I reply, that it is not enough for a nation that it has no enemies. Japan and China are in that happy condition. It is necessary that a State should have some friends. To us, exemption from hatred obtained by insensibility to crime is of no value; still less is the security obtained by selfishness and isolation. Only generosity ever makes friends, and those that it does bring are grateful and enduring.

Again, then, I ask, why not vindicate the Law of Nations by our Protest? One Senator [Mr. CLEMENS] draws an argument against the exercise of national sympathy from the character and conduct he imputes to Louis Kossuth, and represents him as having been reckless and uncalculating before danger approached, and weak and vacillating and shrinking when it was coming on; as having abandoned his country while he had yet one hundred and thirtyfive thousand men; and as having surrendered the State unnecessarily or unwisely to one who for months he had believed a traitor; and as being, therefore, not a hero; and, finally, as addicted to military display, and irreverent of the ashes of Washington, and therefore not a Republican.

Sir, if these assumptions were as correct and just as it has sufficiently appeared that they are erroneous, what would they or the objection raised upon them have to do here and now? This is a trial of Russia at the bar of the Public Justice of the World. How can the verdict be affected by any imagined misconduct of Louis Kossuth here, after Russian intervention in Hungary was ended, or even by any errors or misconduct before, of which Hungary alone, not Russia, had right to complain? The objection is as much out of season as out of place. The character of Louis Kossuth was a preliminary question, and has been decided by Congress with unexampled unanimity, and by a decree awarding such honors as the American People had before found none worthy to receive but the constant and generous Lafayette.

> Gods, of whatsoe'er degree, Resume not what themselves have given.

Freedom, sir, often undervalues, and sometimes mistakes, her friends; but Tyranny never is deceived in her enemics. Let the honorable Senator from Alabama [Mr. CLEMENS] convince the treacherous Bonaparte that Louis Kossuth is not a man to be feared, or the old and subtle Metternich that Louis Kossuth is not a man to be hated. Until then, we must stand upon the judgment we have already rendered.

Once more, then, I ask, why withhold our Protest? The Senator from Alabama [Mr. CLEMENS] would reply, that Hungary is an integral part of the Austrian Empire, and that she will be entitled to our declaration only when she shall, by successful revolution, have established her independence. The form of my proposition defeats the objection. Hungary had always enjoyed and in that very way had re-established her independence when Russia intervened. Gertainly those who maintain that we could not now employ force to separate Hungary from Austria, when Russia has united them by force, cannot deny our right to protest against the crime that Russia thus committed. It would indeed have been better to have protested during the period of the act itself. But the period was short, and we remote. The act is yet recent, and the prospect of a new attempt of Hungary continues the transaction, and renders a censure of the past and a protest against the apprehended renewal of Russian intervention important and seasonable.

There remains the objection, that flows so readily from all conservative pens and tongues on this side of the Atlantic, and still more freely from the stipendiary presses of Paris and Vienna, that a Protest would be a departure from the traditional policy of our country, and from the precepts of Washington. It is passing strange, sir, that Louis Napoleon and Francis Joseph should take so deep an interest in our adherence to our time-honored principles, and in our reverence of the memory of him who inculcated them, not for the immunity of tyrants, but for the security of our own welfare. I know by hearsay that an association during our last contest with Great Britain clothed themselves with these same principles, and even with that illustrious name; that they called themselves the Washington Benevolent Society, celebrated the nativity, and quoted the Farewell Address of Washington to embarrass the Administration in what they were pleased to call an unjust and unholy war, even when it had become a war of national defence. I have known a faction, too, that planted themselves on the same sacred text, to confine to persons of American birth the privileges of American citizenship. A good cause needs not the sanction of that awful name. A bad one often seeks, although it cannot justly claim it. Therefore, I always take the liberty to look underneath the mantle of Washington, on whose so ever shoulders I find it.

Sir, granting for a moment that Washington inculcated just such a policy as is claimed by my opponents, is it so entirely certain that it ought always and under all circumstances to be pursued? Here is a message of his that illustrates the policy he adopted towards, not one only, but all the Barbary Powers, and it received, I think, the unanimous and favorable response of the Senate of the United States:

#### May 8, 1792.

To the Senate of the United States :

If the President should conclude a Convention or treaty with the Government of Algiers for the ransom of the thirteen American citizens in captivity there, for a sum not exceeding \$40,000, all expenses included, will the Senate approve the same? If the President should conclude a treaty with the Government of Algiers, for the establishment of a *peace* with them, at an expense not exceeding \$25,000, paid at the signature, and a like sum to be paid *annually* afterward during the continuance of the treaty, would the Senate approve the same ?

#### GEO. WASHINGTON.

Sir, you and I and all of us would have answered in the affirmative to these questions, had we lived and occupied these places in the last century. I desire to ascertain how many votes such a treaty would receive here now? And I address myself to the honorable Senator from Rhode Island, [Mr. CLARKE,] who moved resolutions against any departure from the policy of Washington. Would you, sir, pay a Barbary Pirate \$40,000 to ransom thirteen captives? and \$25,000 bonus, and \$25,000 annually, for exemption from his depredations? He looks dissentingly. I appeal to my emulous friend from New Jersey, [Mr. MILLER.] Would you, sir? No, not I. I demand from the other honorable Senator from New Jersey, [Mr. STOCKTON,] who in the triple character of Senator, Commodore, and General, presided at the Birthday Congressional Banquet in honor of Washington, and dishonor of his Hungarian disciple, Kossuth, Would you, sir? No, not he. All who are in favor of such a treaty, let them say, Aye. What, sir! not one vote in the Senate of the United States for the continuance of what was in its time a wise and prudent as well as humane policy of Washington! No, not one. And why, sir? The answer is easy: The times have changed, and we have changed with them. No one has ever thought that the Spartans wisely continued the military monastery after their State was firmly established. No one ever has thought that the Rape of the Sabine women by the Romans was a policy to be perpetuated.

But, sir, to come to that part of Washington's Policy which is directly in question. I shall maintain that it was this. It consisted in avoiding new *entangling alliances* and *artificial* ties with one of the belligerent Powers in a general European war, but it admitted of expressions, assurances, and manifestations of sympathy and of interest in behalf of nations contending for the Principles of the American Revolution, and of protest, earnest and decided, against the intervention of foreign Powers to suppress these principles by force; and this, just as I have defined it, is the traditional policy of the United States, and has been pursued until this very day and this very hour.

Mr. President: I might well excuse myself from proving the truth of this proposition, inasmuch as, on the principles I have established, the United States, being a moral person, could not but cherish all that devotion to their own just and true system of politics which the policy I have described implies; and being, moreover, an enlightened as well as generous Power, they could not but desire to see it successfully adopted by other nations; and being, finally, a free nation, they could not fail to speak out their sympathies with those who might be struggling to adopt it, and to utter their indignation at armed intervention by Despotic Powers to deprive them of a right so absolute, and of benefits so inestimable. Least of all could George Washington, the highest human personation of justice and benevolence, have inculcated any other policy than that which I have described. But the issue is one of profound and lasting importance. And therefore History shall prove my proposition to be true, and vindicate my country and her immortal Founder.

Political philosophy, as the last century was approaching its close, was engaged in an effort to discover the true theory of Government. The American Revolution terminated the dispute, by presenting a practical experiment of a free representative Government, directly established by the People, and depending not merely for administration, but for continuance, upon their ever-renewed, constant, and direct activity. France, with mingled motives of previous favor to the new system, and of opposition to a hereditary rival, had recognised the United States at an early day, and granted them seasonable and effective aid, and bound them to her by a treaty of mutual and eternal guarantee and alliance. The French Revolution of 1789 was the American Revolution beginning a new career in Europe. When, in 1792, a popular Constitution had been received by Louis XVI, he announced his acceptance of it to the several nations, and with very different results. It roused all the Monarchies of Europe, sooner or later, to a mighty and combined effort for the extinguishment of the Popular Cause in France, as a necessary measure of security to the Ancient System. On the contrary, the President of the United States transmitted the virtuous, but irresolute King's letter to Congress. The House of Representatives, in their reply, assured him of their "sincere participa-

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tion in the interest of the French Nation on that great and important event, and of their wish that the wisdom and magnanimity displayed in the formation and acceptance of the Constitution might be rewarded by the most perfect attainment of its objectthe permanent happiness of so great a People." This, sir, was the first salutation to Republicanism in Europe by the Government of the United States, and it was, in effect, a Protest against the Armed Intervention then organizing beyond the Rhine. Sardinia and Austria, on the other hand, entered immediately into a treaty, and were soon afterwards followed by Russia, the Netherlands, and Great Britain — and thus was established the first combination, under the name of the Allied Powers, to oppose by force the Principles of the American Revolution. To establish this point, it is necessary to refer only to Wheaton's History of the Law of Nations: "It was an Armed Intervention to restore the ancient order of things in France, and against the principles of the French Revolution, deemed to be of dangerous example and contagious influence on the neighboring Monarchies."

On the 22d of April, 1794, when France had adopted the Republican system, and had driven beyond her borders the Allied Powers who had entered them to vindicate the cause of the deposed and executed monarch, the Committee of Safety, exercising the Executive functions of the State, announced by letter to our Congress, that "a National Government had been born in France, and with it victory; that internal order had been restored, and that the conspirators against the Republic had fallen;" and they declared their desire to "draw closer than ever before the bonds of friendship which united the French Nation and the United States." The Senate, in reply, assured the Committee of Safety of their "friendship and good will for the French Republic," and the House of Representatives declared themselves duly impressed "by the friendly and affectionate manner in which they had been addressed," and tendered "an unequivocal assurance that the Representatives of the People of the United States had much interest in the happiness and prosperity of the French Republic."

The question of a closer political alliance and of more intimate artificial ties with France, thus presented formally by the Committee of Safety, was urged upon Washington with discourtesy and vehemence by agents of that nation. He met it promptly, and denied it emphatically, by the Proclamation of September, 1794, in which he declared that, in compliance with duty and interest, the United States would assume and maintain a neutral attitude in the war then raging in Europe. Disappointed as France was, the Convention of that Republic nevertheless within six months afterwards ordered the American flag to be displayed as a symbol of their principles in the Hall of their debates, and received it, when presented for that purpose by the American Minister, with enthusiastic demonstrations of respect and fraternal affection towards the American People.

Sixteen months after the date of the Proclamation, and while it continued to regulate the action of the Government, Washington received the French Minister. Adet, with a letter from the Committee of Safety, and the tri-colored standard of the French Republic, on the first day of the new year-a day specially appointed, because it was a day of general joy and congratulation. The Committee by that letter informed the United States that they had received, with rapture, assurances of sympathy, which had been given to them by the American Minister in, Paris and added that they were well aware that the United States truly understood that the victories of the French strengthened their own independence and happiness. Washington replied, that "his anxious recollections, his sympathetic feelings, and his best wishes, were irresistibly excited whenever he saw in any country an oppressed nation unfurl the banner of freedom; and that, above all, the events of • the French Revolution had produced in him the deepest solicitude as well as the highest admiration." Rising into a tone of earnestness and enthusiasm, unusual with that seemingly imperturbable Magistrate, he added:

"I rejoice that the interesting revolutionary movements of so many years have issued in the formation of a Constitution designed to give permanency to the great object for which you have contended. I rejoice that *Liberty*, of which you have been the invariable defenders, now finds an asylum in the bosom of a regularly organized Government—a Government which, being formed to secure the happiness of the French People, corresponds with the ardent wishes of my heart, while it gratifies the pride of every citizen of the United States by its resemblance to their own. May the Friendship of the two Republics be commensurate with their existence."

The Senate on that occasion declared that they "united with Washington in all the feelings he had so ardently and so sublimely expressed." The scene in the House of Representatives was among the most inspiring ever exhibited in the Natal Halls of American Independence. On taking the Chair, the Speaker an-

nounced to the House that they would receive a communication which would excite the most pleasing satisfaction in every American heart, and cautioned the Representatives and the People in attendance to confine the fervor of their enthusiasm within the restraints of propriety and dignity. Washington's message was read, the colors of the French Nation were received and unfurled, the Letter of the Committee of Safety was submitted and considered, and thereupon the Representatives unanimously resolved, amid acclamations in and around the Chamber, that they "received the communication of France with sincere and lively sensibility, and that they deemed the presentation of the colors of the French Republic a most honorable testimony of the existing sympathy and affections of the two Republics, founded on their solid and reciprocal interests, and that they rejoiced in the opportunity of congratulating the French Republic on the brilliant and glorious achievements accomplished under it, and that they hoped that those acmevements would be attended with a perfect attainment of their objects-the Liberty and Happiness of that great People.' Sir, were not these ceremonies a demonstration of sympathy with Democracy in Europe? The victories thus celebrated were won from the Allied Powers combined to oppress France by force. Were not these ceremonies a protest against their unlawful intervention?

Nevertheless, the United States persevered in the course marked out by the Proclamation; and Washington, in his Farewell Address, published a year later, declared, in language truly quoted here, that the great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations was in extending our commercial relations to have as little political connection with them as possible, and to avoid implicating ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of European politics, and in the ordinary combinations and collisions of national friendships and enmities. Sir, that policy was necessary, and for that reason, if for no other, was wise. The flames of war raged throughout Western Europe, and its lurid blaze lighted up the Ocean. Both the belligerents recklessly turned Pirates, and supplied themselves by the robbery of our unarmed, unprotected merchant vessels. Great Britain still, in violation of the recent treaty of peace, held the military posts on our Western borders, and had control of the passions of the savages amongst and around us, and was only waiting a pretext for a decisive blow at our newly-acquired independence; and France was seeking at

the same time to involve us in the strife, and to force us to give the pretext. Nevertheless, impatient as she was for our co-operation, she was herself deranged and disorganized, adopting every year a new Constitution, and nearly every month taking for her Executive organ some new and more reckless and ferocious cabal, and thus was unable to assure us against the treachery of her own domestic factions. Well did Jefferson, Secretary of State to Washington, while defending the policy of his immortal Chief, declare that if the United States "had panted for war as much as ancient Rome-if their armies had been as effective as those of Prussiaif their coffers had been full and their debts annihilated "-even then peace would have been too precious to have been put at hazard against odds so fearful, with an ally more dangerous than the enemy. And what was the condition of the United States, that they should have periled all in the domestic fury of France, or on the angry tide of her foreign conflicts? An infant country, sunk deep in debt, without any land or naval force, with an armed enemy on her borders, and from necessity paying tribute at the same time to the African Corsairs; nay, worse—unable to obtain their forbearance, because unsuccessful in borrowing funds to pay the tribute money. What less than madness would it have been to have entered into closer alliance, and to have assumed more intimate ties with a nation whom they could not have aided, and in going to whose help they would have been certain to have perished. Salus Populi est suprema lex. Neutrality was a necessity, and therefore a duty.

I admit that the policy of the Proclamation was continued throughout the whole war, until its close in 1814. Yes; and I confess, moreover, that congratulations and protests ceased with the last imposing ceremony I have described. But the explanation of both of these facts is at hand. The jealousy of the Belligerents did not abate, and the parties changed objects and characters. When France was well nigh exhausted by Factions, the Republic went down, and in its place arose, of course, a Dictator, and afterwards an Empire. She who had at first taken arms in defence of national rights against external intervention, afterwards carried war into the bosoms of the intervening States who now resisted their late enemy to save Europe from an armed Military Despotism. The United States had no longer a cause in Europe to congratulate, to protect, or to defend.

But the American Revolution broke out soon in another region.

As early as 1810, the Spanish Provinces of South America declared their independence, and resorted to arms with brilliant success. The Allied Powers of Europe, flushed with the recent triumph over Napoleon, frowned on the new Western Republics. The United States held at first a subdued tone, in consequence of severe experience in their war with England then just closed. Nevertheless, they regarded the controversy between the Colonies and Spain, not as an ordinary insurrection, but as a civil war between parties nearly equal; while the President, Monroe, asked Congress for a law to render the neutrality code more stringent. The design was alleged to be to prevent the departure of ships built at Baltimore for the new States. This policy was too cold and prudent for the great popular Leader in that day in the House of Representatives, [Mr. CLAY.] He proclaimed that the President, in his anxiety to stand erect, leaned against Freedom ; and, alluding to Spain and the Holy League as oppressors of South America, he declared "he had no sympathy with tyrants." The President dispatched commissioners to seek information of the condition and prospects of the insurgents, just as President Taylor recently did in behalf of Hungary, and with the same object. But the great exponent of American Republicanism was not satisfied, and he thereupon moved in the House of Representatives an appropriation for a direct embassy to the Republic of the Rio de La Plata. In support of that motion, he demanded, with noble, spirit-stirring vehemence: "Are we not bound upon our own principles to acknowledge the new Republic? If we do not, who will? Are we to expect that Kings will set us the example of acknowledging the only Republic on earth except our own?"

A year later, the President, Monroe, taking bolder ground, intimated to Congress and to the world quite distinctly the interest with which the United States regarded the consultations of the Holy League. After saying, in the courtly language of diplomacy, that they had undertaken to *mediate* between Spain and her Colonies, he expressed a very confident belief that they would confine their interposition to the expression of their sentiments, abstaining from force. What was this, sir, but an expression of sympathy with the Republics, and a Protest against Armed Intervention by the Holy League of Europe?

One more year ripened these sentiments into action. "It is not in the power of a virtuous People," said the President, "to behold a conflict so vitally important to their neighbors without the sensibility and sympathy naturally belonging to such a cause." And after announcing that he had tried to engage the co-operation of other Powers to influence Spain, he added, certainly very much in the spirit of the present proceedings, that, "should it become manifest to the world that the efforts of the parent State to subdue the Colonies would be fruitless, it might be presumed that she would relinquish them."

The House of Representatives, either thinking that the probable issue was already manifest, or unwilling to wait for the permission of other Powers, at once replied to the President, that they were even then ready to provide for diplomatic relations with the new Republics; and they tendered to him their constitutional support of a recognition of them whenever he should be pleased to grant it. They marked this decisive declaration by the unusual formality of sending a committee to announce their determinations to the President, at the head of which was justly placed the now distinguished Senator from Kentucky, [Mr. CLAY.] A medal commemorating the civic achievements of that eminent Leader has been recently struck. One of its inscriptions recites this great triumph in behalf of Freedom in South America. Sir, in my judgment, it was the noblest of them all.

Long after the recognition of the South American Republics, the Holy League continued to entertain the appeal of Spain for their intervention. But the spirit of the American People would no longer brook such an unlawful act. In 1823, the President [Monroe] atoned for all past hesitation by that decisive and memorable protest, in which, after urging the inapplicability of the principles before held by our Government on the subject of intervention to the case of the South American States, he avowed that it "was due to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and the Allied Powers of Europe, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any part of this hemisphere as dangerous to our own peace and safety. . . . And that, while we should still remain neutral in the contest, our position would change if their intervention should render it necessary."

The Holy League, nevertheless, kept on secretly consulting on mediation with the sword for the good of the People of this Continent, until John Quincy Adams, President, not appreciating their benevolence nor having the fear of force before his eyes, accepted for the United States, with the support of Congress, an invitation to attend a meeting of the new brotherhood of American Republics, called to discuss measures for the common safety and welfare. While explaining the reasons for that measure, that incorruptible and indomitable Magistrate thus renewed the protest of his Predecessor:

"To the question, 'Whether the Congress of Panama, and the principles which may be adjusted by it, may not give umbrage to the Holy League of European Powers, or offence to Spain,' it is a sufficient answer, that it can give no just cause of umbrage or offence to either, and that the United States will stipulate nothing there which shall give such just cause. Here the right of inquiry into our purposes and measures must stop. The fear of giving umbrage to the Holy League of Europe was urged as a motive for denying to the American nations the acknowledgment of their independence. That it would be viewed by Spain as hostile to her was not only urged, but directly declared by herself. The Congress and the Administration of that day consulted their rights and duties, and not their fears. Neither the Representation of the United States at Panama, nor any measure to which their assent may be yielded there, will give to the Holy League, or any of its members, or to Spain, the right to take offence. For the rest, the United States must still, as heretofore, take counsel from their duties, not their fears."

And now, sir, the scene changes once more to Europe. Two thousand years ago, mercurial, vivacious, spiritual Greece, after continued and restless activity, fell asleep, and during her long slumber the False Prophet of the Koran bound her limbs with hateful and corroding chains. Within our day she moved, and awaked, and rose from the earth, and seized and attempted to break the instruments of her bondage. It was the Spirit of the American Revolution, passing by, that roused her from that lethargy to that noble achievement. The Holy League of Europe, that had trampled Freedom beneath their feet in France, and menaced it so long in South America, consulted how to crush it in the Land of Homer and Pericles and Alcibiades. Greece, confined within her miniature islands and her narrow peninsula, was to us a stranger, a shadow of a name, known to us only by her primitive instructions in all philosophy, by her perfection in all ennobling arts, and by her nursing care of our Holy Religion. But for all that we were not indifferent; and although Despotic Europe offered to unite with Superstitious and Despotic Asia for her subjugation, we were encouraged by the humane sympathies of the world, and did not quite fear to speak out. "It is impossible," said the President, [Monroe,] "to look to the oppressions of Greece without being deeply affected. A strong hope is entertained that that People will secure their independent name and their equal standing among the nations of the earth. From the facts which have come to our knowledge, there is good cause to believe that the Enemy has lost all dominion over them, and that Greece will become an independent nation. That she may obtain that rank, is the object of our wishes." This expression of sympathy for Greece, and this protest against the cruelty and oppression of her tyrant, was reiterated every year until, by the armed intervention of other generous Powers, their object, the emancipation of that People, was obtained. Who can say now how much they did not contribute towards that gratifying result?

Mr. President: just after the revolution of France in 1830, I had the honor to visit Lafavette in La Grange. The porch of his chateau was ornamented with two brass field-pieces, captured from the Army of Charles X by the Citizens of Paris, and presented to its noble proprietor. The hall of entrance was decorated with the mingled drapery of the tri-colored flag of his own country and the stars and stripes of ours. And there he was in retirement, cheerful and hopeful, although disgusted by the treachery of the Citizen King against the principles of the American Revolution, to which he owed his throne. "Sir," said Lafayette, "Louis Philippe will be King some seventeen or eighteen years; but no son of his will ever sit on a throne in France." That longest period had not elapsed when the throne in the Tuilleries disappeared, and the false Monarch was an Exile in England. We all recollect that the American Minister, without waiting for a permanent organization of the nation, or for instructions from home, or for intelligence of the dispositions of the Monarchs of Europe, hastened to intervene and commit his country by saluting the new Republic. The President [Polk] acted with equal promptness and decision.

"The world [said he to Congress] has seldom witnessed a scene more interesting and sublime than the peaceful rising of the French People, resolved to secure to themselves enlarged liberty, and to assert, in the majesty of their strength, the great truth, that in this enlightened age man is capable of governing himself. The prompt recognition of her new Government by the representative of the United States meets my full and unqualified approbation. The policy of the United States has ever been that of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries—leaving each to establish the form of Government of their own choice. While this wise policy will be maintained towards France, now suddenly transformed from a Monarchy into a Republic, all our sympathies are naturally enlisted on the side of a great People, who, imitating our example, have resolved to be free.... Our ardent and sincere congratulations are extended to the patriotic People of France, upon their noble and thus far successful efforts to found for their future government liberal institutions similar to our own."

Congress echoed these just sentiments, and in the name and behalf of the American People "tendered their congratulations to the People of France upon the success of their recent efforts to consolidate the principles of Liberty in a Republican form of Government."

Mr. President: a spark from the flame, which thus breaking out in Paris was regarded with so much pleasure here, kindled the material which had been long gathered and prepared by Louis Kossuth and his compatriots in Hungary. Remote as we were, we watched and followed the revolution in that ancient country with intense interest. We had an agent there ready to tender our congratulations; but the cause went down under the iron pressure of Russian Intervention. When we could do no more, we sought the exiled Chief in Turkey, procured his release from duress and surveillance; and while the Russian and Austrian monarchs, with menaces, demanded his surrender to them by the Ottoman, we brought him, with the ovation of a Conqueror, under protection of our flag, down the Mediterranean, and home to our own shores, and received him with honors that have divided the homage of mankind between ourselves and him.

Sir, even while this slow and languid debate has been going on, we have interceded—informally, indeed, but nevertheless we have interceded—with Great Britain for clemency to imprisoned patriots who, under auspices hopeless, but under the pressure of national evils quite intolerable, had attempted to renew the American Revolution in Ireland. And you and I, and every Senator here, whether he suppresses utterance as some may do, or speaks out as I do, is earnestly hoping that that act of intercession may prevail with the amiable and virtuous Monarch who wields a benignant sceptre over those realms.

Here, sir, the history ends. I will add no glosses to the recital. I will not attempt to simplify the subject, involved as it is in the confusion resulting from the want of definitions of intervention, and from the neglect to discriminate between intervention in the domestic affairs of a nation and opposition against the flagrant act of a strong foreign Power in attacking without just cause or motive a weak but brave one struggling with its proper enemy. I shall not ask the Senate or the country to distinguish between intercession, solicitation, or protest, on the one side, and armed intervention, entangling alliances, and artificial ties, on the other. I will only say that either this Protest is not an Intervention, or we have done little else than to intervene in every contest for Freedom and Humanity throughout the world since we became a nation. That if this act be wrong, we have never done right. If we approve and own the precedents of our predecessors, this act is one which cannot be justly or wisely omitted. The question before us, then, is not whether we shall depart from our traditional policy, but whether we shall adhere to it.

Inasmuch as some will say that I have presented, in too strong relief, the action of the Government in behalf of freedom, I call now on those who maintain that its policy has been one of indiference, to show one act that the United States ever committed, one word that they ever spake, or one thought that they ever indulged, of congratulation, of sympathy, or even of toleration, towards a falling despotism or a successful usurpation.

Having vindicated my country and her statesmen against the implications of indifference, coldness, and isolation, I hope it will not now be thought presumptuous on my part, or irreverent to the memory of Washington, or dangerous to the State, if I inquire on what principle the duty of neutrality was founded by that illustrious man, and whether he enjoined that policy as one of absolute and perpetual obligation? "The duty of holding a neutral conduct," said he, in his Farewell Address, "may be inferred without anything more from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation in cases in which it is free to act to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations." Our "freedom," in that case, resulted from the circumstances which excused us from co-operating with France, notwithstanding our treaty of alliance; and the exercise of "justice and humanity" was in favor of our own People. "The inducements of interest for observing that conduct (said he) will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavor to gain time to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption to that degree of strength and constancy which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortune."

I will not venture on such a question as whether Humanity and Justice may not, in some contingencies, require that we should afford substantial aid to nations as weak as we were in our Revolutionary contest when we shall have matured our strength. Nor will I inquire whether time enough has not been already gained to give us, speaking always with a due sense of dependence on an ever-gracious Providence, the command of our own fortune.

It is clear enough, however, that we distrust our strength seldom, except when such diffidence will serve as a plea for the nonperformance of some obligation of justice or of humanity. But it is not necessary to press such inquiries. What is demanded here is not any part of our fifty millions of annual revenue, nor any use of our credit, nor any employment of our army or of our navy, but simply the exercise of our free right of speech. If we are not strong enough now to dare to speak, shall we be bolder when we become stronger? If we are never to speak out, for what were national lungs given us?

Senators and Representatives of America, if I may borrow the tone of that sturdy Republican, John Milton, I would have you consider what nation it is of which you are Governors—a nation quick and vigorous of thought, free and bold in speech, prompt and resolute in action, and just and generous in purpose—a nation existing for something, and designed for something more than indifference and inertness in times of universal speculation and activity. Why else was this nation chosen, that "out of her, as out of Sinai, should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet" of political reformation to all nations. I would have you remember that the love of liberty is a public affection which this nation has deeply imbibed and has effectually diffused throughout the world; and that she cannot now suppress it, nor smother her desires to promote that glorious cause, for it is her own cause.

Mr. President: I thought that after answering the objections against this Protest, I would show affirmatively why it ought to be adopted. But with the disappearance of opposing arguments, the reasons in favor of it have risen with sufficient distinctness into view. I will only add that it is time to protest. The new outworks of our system of politics in Europe have all been carried away. Republicanism has now no abiding place there, except on the rock of San Marino and in the mountain home of William Tell. France and Austria are said to be conspiring to expel it even there. In my inmost heart, I could almost bid them dare to try an experiment which would arouse the Nations of Europe to resist the commission of a crime so flagrant and so bold.

I have heard frequently here and elsewhere that we can promote the cause of freedom and humanity only by our example, and it is most true. But what should that example be but that of performing not one national duty only, but all national duties; not those beginning and ending with ourselves only, but those also which we owe to other nations and to all mankind. No dim eclipse will suffice to illuminate a benighted world.

I have the common pride of every American in the aggrandizement of my country. No effort of mine to promote it, by just and lawful means, ever was or ever will be withheld. Our flag, when it rises to the topmast or the turret of an enemy's ship or fortress, excites in me a pleasure as sincere as in any other man. And yet I have seen that flag on two occasions when it awakened even more intense gratification. One was when it entered the city of Cork, covering supplies for a chivalrous and generous but famishing people. The other was when it recently protected in his emigration an exile of whom Continental Europe was unworthy, and to whom she had denied a refuge. Sir, it raised no surprise and excited no regret in me to see that Exile and that flag alike saluted and honored by the People, and alike feared and hated by the Kings of Europe.

Let others employ themselves in devising new ligaments to bind these States together. They shall have my respect for their patriotism and their zeal. For myself, I am content with the old ones just as I find them. I believe that the Union is founded in physical, moral, and political necessities, which demand one Government, and would endure no divided States; that it is impregnable, therefore, equally to force or to faction; that Secession is a feverish dream, and Disunion an unreal and passing chimera; and that, for weal or woe, for liberty or servitude, this great country is one and inseparable. I believe, also, that it is Righteousness, not greatness, that exalteth a nation, and that it is Liberty, not repose, that renders national existence worth possessing. Let me, then, perform my humble part in the service of the Republic, by cultivating the sense of Justice and the love of Liberty which are the elements of its being, and by developing their saving influences, not only in our domestic conduct, but in our foreign conduct also, and in our social intercourse with all other States and Nations.

' It has already come to this—that whenever in any country an advocate of Freedom, by the changes of fortune, is driven into Exile, he hastens to seek an asylum here; that whenever a hero falls in the cause of Freedom on any of her battle-fields, his eyes involuntarily turn towards us, and he commits that cause with a confiding trust to our sympathy and our care. Never, sir, as we value the security of our own freedom, or the welfare and happiness of mankind, or the favor of Heaven, that has enabled us to protect both, let that Exile be inhospitably repulsed. Never let the prayer of that dying hero fall on ears unused to hear, or spend itself upon hearts that refuse to be moved.







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